

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO

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UNITED STATES,

Plaintiff,

v.

MARGARET COLE,

Defendant.

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CASE NO. 1:20-cr-00424

OPINION & ORDER

JAMES S. GWIN, UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT JUDGE:

Defendant Margaret Cole faces charges for conspiracy to defraud the United States and alleged false statements to an adoption accrediting entity and a Polish government agency.<sup>1</sup>

Defendant Cole has filed multiple motions related to discovery issues. Those include a motion for a bill of particulars, a motion for a separate trial from her two co-defendants, and a motion to compel the United States to identify known *Brady* material within the disclosed discovery.<sup>2</sup> Defendant Cole reports receiving over thirteen terabytes of discovery amounting to more than two million documents.<sup>3</sup> She further reports being unable to search the documents and being unable to open some documents.<sup>4</sup>

The United States says it has repeatedly helped Cole and her defense team navigate discovery.<sup>5</sup> This includes producing documents electronically in a PDF text-searchable format, including detailed cover letters identifying each category of documents produced

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<sup>1</sup> Doc. 1-2 at ¶¶ 90–98.

<sup>2</sup> Docs. 26; 45; 49.

<sup>3</sup> Doc. 49 at 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* at 2, 5.

<sup>5</sup> Doc. 52 at 2.

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and corresponding bates ranges, organizing documents into navigable sub-folders with labeled bates ranges, and creating a searchable excel index that showed the specific file path of every document included in a government production the defense was having trouble with.<sup>6</sup> The United States has also specifically identified and separately reproduced items requested by Cole's counsel.<sup>7</sup> It has also hosted a video meeting with Cole's counsel to review discovery.<sup>8</sup>

This Court now **DIRECTS** the parties to attend a virtual status conference on November 12, 2021 at 10:00 AM to discuss discovery and update the Court on preparations for trial on February 7, 2022. This Court further **DIRECTS** the United States to submit to the Court in advance of the status conference the explanatory cover letters, examples of how the discovery was organized into sub-folders, and any other documents provided to Defendant Cole to help her navigate discovery.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: October 27, 2021

s/ James S. Gwin  
JAMES S. GWIN  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

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<sup>6</sup> *Id.* at 3–6.

<sup>7</sup> *Id.* at 4–5.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.* at 5.